

HEALTH
A - 9 FEB 1944
C.R. 37

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

A N N U A L R E P O R T
(INTERIM)
of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
(W.F. Young, M.B., D.P.H.)

FOR THE YEAR 1942.



The Chairman and Members of the Newcastle-under-Lyme
Rural District Council.

Gentlemen,

Ministry of Health Circular No.2773 of March 10th, 1943, required that Annual Reports of Medical Officers of Health for 1942 should be on similar lines to those laid down for 1939, 1940, and 1941, viz., that they should be confined to essential and urgent matters which had affected the Public Health during the year, and should pay special attention to such of these as arose from or were connected with the War. It was again requested as for 1941 that, on grounds of national security, certain statistics and other information should not be published.

The above requirements have been complied with in the restricted form of Report which I now have the honour to present to the Council.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) W.F. YOUNG;

12th January, 1943.

Medical Officer of Health.

SECTION A.

Statistics and Social Conditions in the Area

Registrar-General's estimate of resident population, mid-1941	Withheld
Approximate number of inhabited houses in the Area		Withheld
Rateable Value 1st April 1942	£57,176
Sum represented by a penny rate	£223
	England and Wales	Newcastle-under-Lyme R. D.
Birth Rate 15.8	Withheld
Death Rate 11.6	11.1 ^W
Infantile Mortality Rate	49	76

* Comparability Factor suspended.

Table 1 makes comparison between the incidence of (a) maternal mortality in the District and in England and Wales as a whole, and (b) of the incidence of puerperal fever and puerperal pyrexia.

Table 1.

(a)	England and Wales	Newcastle-under-Lyme R. D.
<u>Maternal Mortality*</u>		
Puerperal Infection	0.42	0.00
Other Causes	1.59	0.00
Total	2.01	0.00
(b)		
<u>Notifications*</u>		
Puerperal Fever)		
Puerperal Pyrexia)	12.61	7.17

* Rates per 1,000 total births (live and still).

SOCIAL CONDITIONS

There was no evidence that the War had had any harmful effect on the general health of the population as a whole. Health and well-being appear to have been maintained at a satisfactory level, and the rationing of articles of food and clothing does not seem to have had any untoward results.

There can be little doubt that the issue of national dried milk, fruit juices, and cod-liver oil to children of less than five years of age played a considerable part in the prevention of diseases which it was anticipated might otherwise result from a shortage of certain articles of food. The arrangements made by the local Food Officer for the distribution of these preparations continued to work most smoothly and efficiently. Centres at Ashley, Audley, Baldwin's Gate, Betley, Halmerend, and Madeley were in use during the year. Particulars of issue were as follows:-

	<u>Number of Recipients</u>	
	<u>Free</u>	<u>Cheap</u>
Milk	230	845
Vitamins (Cod-liver Oil and Fruit Juice)	215	510
Dried Milk	21	29

Special preparations of dried milk and a variety of other commodities continued to be available at Audley, Halmerend, and Madeley Infant Welfare Centres at reduced rates of payment under the County Council scheme. From my personal knowledge of a large number of cases I can say without hesitation that the health of the "under fives" generally was of a highly satisfactory standard.

Medical inspection at the public elementary schools in the District showed that there was no deterioration of the health of the children. The Education Committee's "Milk in Schools" scheme continued to work smoothly and with marked benefit. During the year School Feeding Centres were in operation at Halmerend, Ashley, and Butterson. The District Food Officer informed me that 1360 meals were served weekly. The Centres proved very popular. Although no accurate statistics are available there can be no doubt that among certain sections of the school population the provision of hot mid-day meals of adequate quantity, appetising character, and balanced vitamin content are bound to have highly beneficial results both physically and mentally.

Evacuees. The numbers remaining fell during the year, and there were approximately only 200 in the District at its close.

SECTION B.

General Provision of Health Services in the Area

There is no change to record in the provision detailed in previous Reports, and during the year there was no change in personnel.

SECTION C.

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

Water.

Although the position with regard to quantity was not free from anxiety, no actual shortage occurred. Leaflets and posters emphasising the need for care in use were distributed in April.

Of eleven bacteriological and seven chemical analyses all but one, a bacteriological analysis of water from a well, were found to be satisfactory. Connection to a main supply was effected at the premises from which the unsatisfactory sample had been obtained.

Drainage and Sewage Disposal.

There is little change to report. The Council's Disposal Works at Audley were inspected by a consulting engineer in January and June. He reported that the plant was in good working-order and that the effluent was highly satisfactory.

Sanitary Inspection.

The work of the Sanitary Inspector's Department was again greatly restricted as a result of the war-time increase in duties unconnected with sanitary matters. Routine inspection in consequence had again practically to be abandoned and attention confined to urgent matters..

SECTION D.

Housing.

There is little change to report. Much difficulty was experienced in dealing with the increased dilapidation of the older properties. Several cases of overcrowding came to notice and abatement was not found possible in most of them.

SECTION E.

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

Apart from the discovery of a small quantity of unsound food, mainly tinned, there was nothing to report.

SECTION F.

Notifiable Infectious Disease.

The following Table shows the numbers of cases notified during the last four years.

Table 2.

	1939	1940	1941	1942
Scarlet Fever	33	24	6	29
Diphtheria	1	2	3	12
Whoopingcough*	1	19	52	69
Measles*	2	73	345	152
Erysipelas	7	9	2	4
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	2	4	1	5
Pneumonia†	7	26	21	3
Cerebro-spinal Fever	0	3	0	2
Smallpox	0	0	0	0
Typhoid Fever	0	0	0	0
Paratyphoid Fever	0	0	3	0
Puerperal Pyrexia	2	0	0	2
Acute Anterior Polio-myelitis	0	0	1	1

* Became notifiable in October, 1939.

† Notifiable cases only.

Table 3.

Deaths from Infectious Diseases.

(a) Notifiable Cases.

Scarlet Fever.. 0. Diphtheria.. 1. Whoopingcough.. 0.
 Measles.. 0. Cerebro-spinal Fever.. 1. Acute Anterior
 Polio-Myelitis.. 0. Pneumonia (Notifiable and Non-
 notifiable).. 7.

(The fatal case of diphtheria occurred in a child who was a new-comer to the District and had not been immunised).

(b) Non-Notifiable Cases.

Influenza.. 3. Diarrhoea (children under two years of age).. 1.

A table was prepared comparing the incidence and death-rates of certain notifiable infectious diseases in England and Wales as a whole and in Newcastle-under-Lyme Rural District. In accordance with the Ministry of Health's requirements referred to on page 1 these figures have been withheld from the Report, but it may be said that except in the cases of whoopingcough and measles the general incidence of infectious disease in the District compared very favourably with that for England and Wales. The diphtheria figure was particularly satisfactory.

With regard to mortality from infectious diseases, the death-rates from whoopingcough and measles in the District were lower than those for England and Wales, while that for diphtheria was slightly higher, and from influenza considerably higher.

Diphtheria Prophylaxis.

Attention was again mainly concentrated on the immunisation of children of the more susceptible ages, viz. 1 - 9 years. Table 4 gives some particulars with regard to immunisation in 1941 and 1942.

Table 4.

- (a) Numbers of children who completed courses of immunisation in 1941 and 1942:-

	<u>1-5 years of age</u>	<u>5-14 years of age</u>	<u>Totals</u>
1941	363	713	1076
1942	275	257	532
	638	970	1608

- (b) Estimated percentages of children who had completed courses of immunisation by the end of these years:-

	<u>1-5 years of age</u>	<u>5-14 years of age</u>
1941	45%	38%
1942	56%	59%

SCABIES ORDER, 1941

The measures referred to in my Annual Report for 1941 with regard to ascertainment of the numbers of cases continued to be made use of, and early in 1942 it became clear that there was a considerable number of cases in the District.

Permission was granted by Regional Air Raid Precautions Control to use the gas-cleansing department of the First Aid Post at Raven's Lane, and general adaptation of the premises was made, including the fitting of baths in the shower-rooms. The services of a local doctor were obtained so that all cases referred for treatment could be inspected as to suitability and with regard to progress. The Centre was opened for the treatment of cases in July.

A proportion of cases continued to be cared for by patients' own doctors, and treatment at the centre was in the main restricted to cases where attention at home was unlikely to be effective, e.g. in severe cases and where whole families were involved.

The application used was benzyl benzoate emulsion. The great majority of cases seem to have been cured after either one or two treatments. In a few cases difficulty was encountered in connection with attendance, but the question of compulsion did not arise. Several evacuee children were treated at Sick Bays provided by the County Education Committee.

In one instance twelve cases came to notice among the members of three families living in one house. It was found impracticable to deal with these cases at the centre, and treatment was arranged by the staff of the Public Assistance Committee at institutions.

Table 5 gives statistics of attendances and numbers of cases treated at the centre.

Table 5.

Scabies Treatment Centre

Total Numbers of Attendances during 1942

1942 Quarters	Adults		School Children		Children under Five		Totals
	New	Old	New	Old	New	Old	
Third	24	21	22	22	2	3	94
Fourth	25	35	27	49	5	5	146
	49	56	49	71	7	8	240

Total number of Cases dealt with :- 105

Number of Attendances per case :- 2.3

Total number of sessions held :- 19

Tuberculosis.

The numbers of new cases notified and coming to knowledge otherwise than by notification were as follows:-

<u>Notifications etc.</u>	<u>1939</u>	<u>1940</u>	<u>1941</u>	<u>1942</u>
Pulmonary	15	18	9	4
Non-Pulmonary	3	7	6	6
<u>Deaths</u>				
Pulmonary	7	6	5	3
Non-Pulmonary	0	1	0	2

TUBERCULOSIS

In view of the attention that is at present being concentrated on the increases in the incidence of and the mortality from the disease in the country as a whole, the following particulars for this District may be of interest.

1. New cases notified and numbers of deaths during the last three years:-

	<u>New Cases</u>		<u>Deaths</u>	
	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary
1940	12	6	7	2
1941	8	5	5	0
1942	7	7	3	2

2. Average numbers of new cases notified and of deaths during the last eight years:-

	<u>New Cases</u>		<u>Deaths</u>	
	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary
	10	6	5.5	1.5

3. Average numbers of new cases notified and of deaths during the last three years:-

	<u>New Cases</u>		<u>Deaths</u>	
	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary
	9	6	5	1.3

From these figures it may be inferred that the average numbers of new cases and deaths in the District during the last three years both show a slight decrease on those for the last eight years.

Causes of Death in the District
during 1942

In accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of Health this information has been withheld.
